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The ballots for the annual election of President, Council, and Officers, having been scrutinized in the face of the Academy, the President reported that the following gentlemen were duly elected :—

PRESIDENT.—The Very Rev. Dean Graves, D. D.

COUNCIL.—Rev. George Salmon, D. D. ; Rev. Samuel Haughton, M. A. ; Rev. J. H. Jellett, M. A. ; Robt. W. Smith, M. D. ; Rev. H. Lloyd, D. D. ; William K. Sullivan, M. D. ; and Robert M'Donnell, M. D. : on the Committee of Science.

Rev. Samuel Butcher, D. D. ; Rev. Joseph Carson, D. D. ; John F. Waller, LL. D. ; John Kells Ingram, LL. D. ; Digby P. Starkey, Esq. ; John Anster, LL. D. ; and the Right Hon. Joseph Napier, LL. D. : on the Committee of Polite Literature.

John T. Gilbert, Esq. ; Rev. William Reeves, D. D. ; Eugene Curry, Esq. ; William R. Wilde, Esq. ; George Petrie, LL. D. ; W. H. Hardinge, Esq. ; and the Right Hon. Lord Talbot de Malahide : on the Committee of Antiquities.

TREASURER.—Rev. Joseph Carson, D. D.

SECRETARY OF THE ACADEMY.—Rev. William Reeves, D. D.

SECRETARY OF THE COUNCIL.—John Kells Ingram, LL. D.

SECRETARY OF FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.—Rev. Samuel Butcher, D. D.

LIBRARIAN.—John T. Gilbert, Esq.

CLERK, ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN, AND CURATOR OF THE MUSEUM.—Edward Clibborn, Esq.

MONDAY, APRIL 14, 1862.

The VERY REV. CHARLES GRAVES, D. D., President, in the Chair.

Andrew Armstrong, Esq. ; John Campbell, Esq., M. B. ; John Stratford Kirwan, Esq. ; and George Porte, Esq., C. E. ; were elected members of the Academy.

MR. J. T. GILBERT, on the part of R. R. MADDEN, Esq., read the following paper :—

ON CERTAIN CROMLECHS IN NORTHERN AFRICA.

(Plate XVI.)

IN the month of December, 1861, while sojourning in Algiers, the existence in that colony of some ancient Pagan monuments of supposed Druidical origin was brought to my knowledge by a brief notice of them in the "*Revue Africaine*," for Nov., 1861 (No. 30, p. 38)—an archæological journal of considerable merit, published in Algiers, under the direction of the President of the "*Société Historique Algérienne*," Monsieur Berbrugger, an eminent antiquarian and oriental scholar. Referring to the

locality named El-Kalaa, M. Berbrugger says,—“ Leaving the village of Cheragas, we come to a road which leads to Guyotville, by the communal district called Bainen, where the Druidical monuments are to be found of El-Kalaa, of which I have given a description in a memoir addressed to the Governor-general, the 22nd February, 1856 (numbered 14), and which will be soon published in the ‘Revue Africaine’ ” (but which I have to add never has been published). The writer further adds, that in the vicinity of Guyotville is the district of Haouche Khodja-Biri, and on the left of it is the Koubbade Sidi-Khelef. Shaw, the English traveller, he continues, states that he saw from this place certain tombs surmounted by a large stone, in each of which tombs three human bodies might be placed. Shaw’s account, M. Belbrugger remarks, applies very probably to the *Dolmens* of El-Kalaa.

The precise words of Shaw, in his “Travels in Barbary and the Levant,” fol., 1738, p. 67, in reference to these monuments, are the following:—“ We meet with several pieces of Roman workmanship between Seedy Ferje and Algiers; and near the tomb of Seedy Hallef, another Marabout, we fall in with a number of graves covered with large flat stones, each of them big enough to receive two or three bodies.”

I regret to say, Shaw’s reference to “the graves” he saw in this locality, which I have no doubt are “the Druidical monuments” or “Dolmens” noticed by M. Belbrugger, is quite as unsatisfactory as the notice of these monuments by the latter gentleman. Nor did a personal interview with him make any addition to my information respecting the Druidical monuments noticed by him, beyond the facts that they were in every respect identical with the rude Pagan monuments, designated Druids’ altars, or sepulchral stones of Druidical origin, existing in Brittany, and that the number of them existing at Bainen long after the French occupation of Algeria could not be under *one hundred and fifty*; but that a colonist, a French farmer, who had obtained from the government a grant of the land on which these monuments stood, had destroyed all of them with the exception of thirteen, which were then in a perfect state of preservation.

I set out to visit these remains, accompanied by my son, Dr. T. M. Madden, the day following this interview. Although the distance from Algiers to Bainen is only about thirteen miles (in a westerly direction), after leaving Cheragas the road is so bad, and so many *detours* have to be made after much rain, that the journey in a caleche with three horses, takes nearly three hours and a half, and the distance of it may be set down at sixteen or seventeen miles. To give a more distinct idea of the situation of those monuments, I may state they exist rather more than halfway between Algiers and Sidi Ferruch, where the French army disembarked in 1830, and about one mile and a half inland to the south from the village of Guyotville, formerly named Ain-Benian on the coast.

On our arrival at the place where the monuments designated *Dolmens*, of supposed Druidical origin, exist, we proceeded to the house of the colonist, Monsieur Mareschal, who is the proprietor of the lands, the

locality of which is named Bainen. He conducted us to an eminence not far distant from the house, situated on a table-land about 650 feet above the level of the sea (the neighbouring town of Cheragas is 198 metres, or about 616 feet, above the sea). There, to my great astonishment, I found thirteen cromlechs, in all important respects identical with our Irish monuments of that name, within an area certainly not extending above a quarter of a mile in any direction; and within a range of about double that distance, I discovered the remains of twenty of those monuments recently demolished or partially destroyed; and in a wider range of view that the proprietor pointed out to me, clearly defined, and within the limits of his own lands, he showed me the several localities where upwards of *one hundred and eighty* more of these Dolmens, as he alleged, were in existence when he took possession of the land, but where they exist no more; for with the sanction of the government, and as it was stipulated in the terms of the concession obtained by him, *he was allowed by the authorities to demolish all these monuments, and to appropriate the materials to building purposes, and the making and repairing of paths and roads, with the exception of thirteen.* The latter number, he said, the authorities obliged him to leave on the ground and to preserve. So much for the march of civilization in a French colony, and the military administration of a country recently rescued from a *regime* of barbarism.

The existing monuments (Dolmens as they are termed) are generally in a direction (though not exactly so) north and south, the apex or uplifted end that tapers towards a point, in most of them, being to the south or south-east. The covering slab of unhewn rock rests in a slanting direction on supporters likewise of unwrought stone of various numbers, set up on their edge. The inclination of the covering slab varies considerably, but it is quite obvious in all. There were no appearances of grooved channels on the face of any of them; round one, the remains were still distinguishable of a circle of upright stones. The proprietor of the ground informed me there were several of those circles of stone; but they had been broken down and removed by him, along with the Dolmens they surrounded, when he cleared the land.

On the surface of the ground, within the space covered by the great slanting mass of superincumbent stone, in several of these monuments there are fragments of human bones, and evidences in the soil of excavations having been recently made there. The present proprietor informed me he had excavated several, and found urns of various sizes of baked clay, some containing fragments of bone, others ashes and small pieces of bones mixed with clay. He had found in them also beads and bracelets, several implements of bronze, but of the nature of these it was impossible to get any intelligible or reliable account. He had sent these objects, he said, and the urns found with them, to a friend in Algiers, to deposit in the Museum, but they had never reached their destination there. He possessed, at the time of my visit, only one small urn, which he had recently found in one of the demolished Dolmens; and this, with

some fragments of bones, evidently of great antiquity, both of human beings and of animals, I purchased from him.*

Surrounding the Dolmen still existing, where many fragments of very ancient bones are lying within the space covered by the great sloping cover, the proprietor says there existed a circle of stones much smaller than those which are the side supporters of this monument. The remains of some of the stones of this circle are still to be seen, not above two feet from the soil in which they are imbedded. The covering slab of one of the largest of the existing Dolmens is nine feet and a half in length, and the same in breadth at the base. It has three supporters on each side. The height of the space at the entrance between the great sloping covering stone is four feet and a half high. The thickness of the great slab at the base is eighteen inches.

I regret that my state of health did not allow me to make more extensive researches, and to give more ample and exact details of measurements and positions. Enough, I trust, has been done in this statement of my observations on the spot where these monuments exist, to show the identity of the monuments designated Dolmens, with our cromlechs.†

I may observe, that after visiting those African monuments I addressed a letter to M. Belbrugger, the principal editor of the "Revue Africaine," and president of the Société Historique Algérienne, expressing my astonishment as a foreigner—not considering myself privileged to

* With respect to the urns above referred to, I may observe that the following notice of objects of antiquity found in those monuments, at Ain Benain, is given in the Catalogue of the Musée of Antiquities of Algiers, entitled "Livret Explicatif." Par A. Berbrugger. At page 86 :—

"Ain-Benian (Guyotville).

- "222. Hachétte celtique, en pierre noire polie
" Trouvée dans les sépultures celtiques d'El Kalaa, dans le Baïnen.
- " 222. (Bis) Hachétte, semblable à la précédente et de même origine.
- " 221. Cinq daras de flèche en silex.
" Même provenance que devant.
- " 220. Couteau en silex.
" Même provenance que devant.
- " 219. Hachétte celtique en jade, trouvée dans les dolmen d'El Kalaa.
" Vendu par M. Godard ainsi que les objets précédents de même provenance.
- " 231. Fragments de crânes humains, trouvés en Mai, 1857, dans les dolmen d'El Kalaa, et donnés par M. Matelat, juge au tribunal civil d'Alger.
- " 160. Objets trouvés par le colon Marchal dans les dolmen du Baïnen, à El Kalaa :—
" 1°. Quatre petits vases gaulois en terre,
" 2°. Deux bracelets en bronze.
" 3°. Divers fragments en cuivre et en plomb.
" 4°. Deux petites fibules en bronze.
" 5°. Un crâne humaine et unâchoir."

† The etymology of the term *Dolmen* is thus given by the learned author of "L'Archéologie Chrétienne," in the "Vocabulaire des Mots Techniques" of that work (5^{ième} ed. 8vo, Tours, 1854, p. 358):—" *Dolmen* monument Druidique qu'on pense généralement avoir servi d'Autel; *Dol*, table, *Maen*, *Men*, pierre."

use the word indignation—at the destruction of those monuments with the express sanction of the ruling powers of the colony—monuments which had survived the ravages of time and war probably for more than two thousand years, and all the barbarism of the various tribes and races of Mauritania and Numidia, that have sojourned in, or swept over those regions of northern Africa for many hundreds of years past. M. Belbrugger made me no reply, being, perhaps, fortunately ignorant of the reprisals that might be made on any complaints like mine against the barbarisms of civilization in a French possession in respect to modes of dealing with monuments of antiquity of great value and historical interest.

The preceding notice, I believe, is the first given in our country to British archæologists of cromlechs existing in Africa. Of their existence in Palestine they have a knowledge from the following description of such monuments in the travels of Captains Irby and Mangles:—

“On the banks of the Jordan, at the foot of the mountain, we observed some very singular, interesting, and certainly very ancient tombs, composed of great rough stones, resembling what is called Kit’s Coty House (a well-known cromlech in Kent). They are built of two long side stones, with one at each end, and a small door in front, mostly facing the north: this door was of stone. All were of rough stones, apparently not hewn, but found in flat fragments, many of which are found about the spot in huge flakes. Over the whole was laid an immense flat piece, projecting both at the sides and ends. What rendered these tombs the more remarkable was, that the interior was not long enough for a body, being only five feet. This is occasioned by both the front and back stones being considerably within the ends of the side ones. There are about twenty-seven of these tombs, very irregularly situated.”

The authors designate these monuments, “oriental tombs.”

But who were the Africans of that region, in the vicinity of the ancient Icosium (the supposed site of which is Algiers), by whom such numerous monuments of the highest antiquity, and so entirely identical with our cromlechs, were erected? What notices are to be found in our ancient annals of any relations of the early inhabitants of this country with those of Africa?

In Keating’s “Complete History of Ireland,” translated from the Irish by Haliday, 8vo. Dub. 1811, we find (vol. i. chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9), several references to “African pirates,” sometimes denominated Fomorians, who, within a period of three hundred years after the flood, had arrived in Ireland, eventually became masters of all the colonized portion of the island, and were, after a short time of domination, expelled by new invaders.

In the second section of chapter 2, we are told that “Ireland was an uninhabited desert for the space of three hundred years (after the flood), until Parolon (the Partholanus of other writers), son of Shara, son of Sru, son of Esru, son of Frament, son of Fahaght, son of Magog, son of Japhet, came to take possession of it.” . . . “This induces me to

think," adds Keating, "that it was two-and-twenty years before Abraham was born that Paralon came into Ireland, and in the year of the world 1978."

Then we are told that Paralon, who was accompanied by his family and a thousand soldiers, "began his journey from Migdonia in the middle of Greece," and established his colony at Inish Samer, near Errie.

"Some authors," says Keating, "mention another colonization of Ireland (previous to that of Paralon), namely, by Keecol, son of Nil, son of Garv, son of Uamor, whose mother was Lot-Luavna, and they lived two hundred years by fishing and fowling. Upon the arrival of Paralon in Ireland, a great battle was fought between them at Moy Lhha, when Keecol fell, and the pirates were destroyed by Paralon. The place where Keecol landed with his followers was Inver Downan; his fleet consisted of six ships, in each of which were fifty men and fifty women."

"The reason," we are told, "why Paralon came to Ireland was because he slew his father and mother in hopes of obtaining the government from his brother, after which base murder he fled to Ireland; but the Lord sent a plague, which, in the short space of one week, carried off nine thousand of his posterity at the hill of Howth."

Paralon, we are informed, "died in the old plains of Moynalta of Howth, and was buried there." "The death of Paralon happened about thirty years after his arrival in Ireland. This event took place, as some antiquaries affirm, in the year of the world 2628, although I am induced to believe, from what has been said before, that there were only 1986 years from the creation of the world to the decease of Paralon."—Keating, vol. i. page 171.

In chapter vii. vol. i. p. 179; we are informed Ireland was without inhabitants for thirty years after the extinction of the colony, till Nevvy, the Nemedius of other writers, came to Ireland with his people from Scythia, by the Euxine Sea, with a fleet of thirty-four transports, with thirty men in each. Some years after his arrival, we are told, "Nevvy built two royal mansions in Ireland—the fort of Kinneh, in Hy-Nellan, and the fort of Kimbæh, in Shevny. The four sons of Madan Thieckneck (Munreamhair), of the Fomorians, reared fort Kinneh in one day. Their names were Bog, Rovog, Ruvney, and Rodan; and Nevvy (Nemedius), slew them the next morning in Derrylee, lest they should resolve on destroying the fort again, and there he buried them."—*Ib.* vol. i. p. 179.

The battles fought by Nevvy with the Fomorians, we are told, ended in their subjugation. Keating then gives the following account of the latter:—

"These were navigators of the race of Cham, who, sailing from Africa, fled to the Islands of the West of Europe toward the descendants of Shem, and to make a settlement for themselves; fearing these would enslave them, in vengeance for the curse pronounced by Noah against Cham their ancestor, for they thought by making a settlement remote from them to be secure from their oppression. On this account they

came to Ireland, and were vanquished by Nevvy in three battles, viz , the battle of Slievbloom, the battle of Rossfræhan, in Conacht, wherein fell Gonn and Gannan the two leaders of the Fomorians; and the battle of Murvolg, in Dalriada, or Ruta, where Starn, son of Nevvy, fell by Coning, son of Fævar, in Lehidlactmoy; he also fought the battle of Cnavross, in Leinster, where there was slaughter of the Irish, led on by Nevvy's own son Arthur, born to him in Ireland, and by Iveon, son of Starn, son of Nevvy.

"After this Nevvy died of a plague in the island of Nevvy's grave, in Leehan's county, in Munster, now called the Island of Barrymore, and with him two thousand of his people, men and women.

"After Nevvy's death, great tyranny and oppression was exercised over his followers in Ireland by the Fomorians, in vengeance of those defeats by Nevvy, which we have just related."—*Ib.* vol. i. p. 179.

The Fomorians of More and Coning, of Tory Island (or, as some call it, Tor Conuing), in the north of Ireland, entirely subdued the old inhabitants, and made them tributaries. The Fomorian conquerors, having fitted out several ships, and collected large bodies of soldiers, began to oppress the unfortunate Nemedians, obliging them at a fixed period every year to pay a heavy tribute, and to deliver up not only contributions of cattle and produce, but even of their children.

The mode of levying and collecting contributions, described by Keating, might serve for an account of the same system of imposing and enforcing tribute in many parts of Northern Africa in much later times. The Nemedians, at length, unable to bear the rapacity of their tyrants, made a vigorous and nearly successful effort to drive them out of the country.

"These people," says Keating, "were denominated Fomorians, i. e. sea robbers or pirates; for the term signifies powerful at sea, or seafaring men."—*Ib.* vol. i. p. 181.

The Nemedians at length made a formidable resistance, were successful for some time, and in their turn oppressed the Fomorians.

On the news of the disasters sustained by the latter reaching their countrymen in Africa, as it would appear, the latter fitted out a fleet, set sail from an African port, and landed on the Irish coast. How strongly is the reader of the wars of Grenada reminded of the several expeditions attempted or undertaken in Northern Africa for the relief of the Moors in the various settlements on the shores of Andalusia!

The fleet from Africa, of sixty sail, with a numerous force, arrived on the northern coast of Ireland. Another fierce battle was fought, in which the Nemedians were entirely defeated. Most of the survivors of this colony contrived to escape from the country; and the remnant of them, who were left in servitude, continued to exist in this miserable state till the arrival of the Firbolg invaders in Ireland, 216 years after Nemedius first arrived upon the coast.*

* Keating, vol i. p. 187.

So far my notice of the African pirates has been from Keating's History. I must now refer to the Annals of the "The Four Masters," edited by our lamented and illustrious associate, O'Donovan, for some details additional to those of Keating, and in some respects at variance with them.

Thus we are informed, in the Annals :—

"From the deluge until Parthalon took possession of Ireland, 278 years, and the age of the world when he arrived in it, 2520." . . .

"The age of the world, 2530. In this year the first battle was fought in Ireland, i. e. Cical Grigenchosach, son of Coll, son of Garbh, of the Fomorians, and his mother, came into Ireland eight hundred in number, so that a battle was fought between them (and Parthalon's people) at Sleamhnai-Maighe-Ithe, where the Fomorians were defeated by Parthalon, so that they were all slain. This is called the battle of Magh-Ithe."

Then, in the age of the world, 2550, we are told Parthalon died.

Under date, Anno Mundi, 2820, the destruction of the remnant of the colony of Parthalon is mentioned, and the fact of their having passed three hundred years in Ireland. Then, we are told "Ireland was thirty years waste till Neimhidh's arrival."

"Age of the world, 2850, Neimhidh came to Ireland." . . .

Subsequently to 2859, A. M., but the precise year not specified, three battles of Neimhidh with the Fomorians, and his victories over the latter, are recorded. Then the death of Neimhidh, of a plague, with three thousand of his followers, is recounted; and next, in the year of the world, 3066, we are told :—

"The demolition took place of the tower of Conainn (on Tory Island, off the county of Donegal), by the race of Neimhidh against Conainn, son of Fæbhar, and the Fomorians in general, in revenge for all the oppression they had inflicted upon them (the race of Nemhidh), as is evident from the chronicle which is called Leabhar-Gabhala; and they nearly all mutually fell by each other; thirty persons alone of the race of Neimhidh escaped to different quarters of the world, and they came back to Ireland some time afterwards as Firbolgs. Two hundred and sixteen years Neimhidh and his race remained in Ireland. After this Ireland was a wilderness for a period of two hundred years."

"The age of the world, 3260. The Firbolgs took possession of Ireland at the end of this year."

Thus far for the references in the Annals of "The Four Masters" to the Fomorians.

The Abbé M'Geoghegan, in his "Histoire d'Irlande," names the victors and oppressors of the Nemedians, "the Fomorians, or Fom-horaigs." But of their former marauding pursuits and African descent he makes no mention, neither do the authors of the "Annals of Ireland."

O'Halloran, in his "History of Ireland" (4to, 1778, vol. i. p. 3), referring to the arrival in Ireland of Parthalon and his colony from

Greece, in the year of the world 1956, as the "Book of Invasions" states, 278 years after the flood (O'Flaherty makes the period 35 years later), says:—

"The Book of Conquests mentions, but as an affair not authenticated, that before the arrival of Partholon, Ireland was possessed by a colony from Africa, under the command of Ciocall, between whom and the newcomers a bloody battle was fought, in which the Africans were cut off."

Again, at page 4, the same author, referring to the arrival of the Neimhedians, or the second colony in Ireland, says—"An African colony had been settled in the north, long before the arrival of the Neimhedians, who were far from being so barbarous as represented." And then the author makes mention of their skill in constructing large edifices, and of the different battles of the Fomharaigh with the Neimhedians, and of the final discomfiture of the latter—though, as we are told, "they fought against the Africans with a resolution equal to the desperateness of their affairs. In this battle Conuing, the son of Faobhar, the African chief, with most of his troops, were slain, and their principal garrison, Tor Conuing, levelled to the ground; soon after which, More, the son of Dela, who had been absent with his fleet, endeavouring to land in this northern quarter (an island in the present Tir Connell), was opposed by the Neimhedians, but after a bloody conflict these last were defeated with great slaughter—such as escaped the sword perishing in the water."

The remainder of O'Halloran's account of the African pirates corresponds mainly with that of Keating. Of the destiny of the Fomorians, after the landing in Ireland of the Belgæ or Firbolgs, the third colony of adventurers, nothing is said, and evidently nothing was known by either O'Halloran or Keating; nor do we derive any information on this subject from the compilers of "The Annals of the Four Masters."

It is in vain to look for the name of any tribe in Africa resembling even that of the Fomorians in the works of the ancient geographers and historians—in those of Strabo, Pomponius Mela, Ptolomæus, Scylax, Herodotus, Diodorus, Pliny, Solinus, and Orosius. But no argument against their existence can be relied on by those who bear in mind the extraordinary transmutations which names of ancient nations, tribes, and countries have undergone in the course of ages, and who bear in mind how the names of the same peoples and regions are differently rendered in the works of the most celebrated geographers and historians of antiquity.

It is not for me to enter into any disquisition in this paper on the origin, structure, or uses of those ancient monuments we designate cromlechs, and the French, Dolmens, which I believe to be identical with those I have lately seen in Northern Africa. But the purpose of this notice makes it necessary to call attention, very briefly, to the leading points in the accounts that have been given of those monuments, and the views entertained of their origin and purpose by eminent archæologists in those countries.

In Grose's "Antiq. of Ireland" (vol. i. p. 17, Introd.), a description is given of two cromlechs of gigantic proportions, one at Tobinstown, Co. of Carlow. "The west end (is said to be) sustained on two upright pillars, somewhat round but irregular, each eight feet high, terminated behind by a broad flat stone set on the edge, eight feet high, and nine broad, making a portico (an open space more properly) of six feet wide, and four deep. This is covered by the cromlech or large sloping stone, twenty-three feet long, eighteen broad at the upper end over the open space between the two front supporters, and six at the lower or back part, where it rests on small stones about a foot high. Its thickness at the upper end is four feet, and at the lower two. The under surface is plain and even, but the upper convex. The upper part has a large channel, from which branches off a number of smaller ones; to some they appear natural, to others artificial for sacrificial purposes. The sides are enclosed and supported by several upright anomalous stones from three to six feet high, making a room eighteen feet long; eight at the upper or west end, and five broad at the opposite one, and from two to eight feet high, perfectly secure against every inconvenience of weather."

The other cromlech at Brownstown, Co. Carlow, referred to by Grose, "consists of an immense rock stone raised on an edge from its native bed, and supported on the east by three pillars. At a distance is another pillar by itself, nearly round, and five feet high. The dimensions of the supporters and covering stones, are as follows:—

	Feet.	Inches.
Height of the three supporters,	5	8
Thickness of the upper end of the covering-stone,	4	6
Breadth of the same,	18	9
Length of the same,	19	0
Length of the outside,	23	4

Solid contents in feet 1280, weighing nearly eighty-nine tons, five hundreds, making an angle with the horizon of 34° . Such are the accounts which I have received of these curious monuments, from my learned and ingenious friend, Mr. William Beauford, of Athy." Among the existing African monuments identical with our cromlechs, there are none at all approaching to the dimensions of those referred to by Grose.

A cromlech in Louth, in the parish of Ballymascanlan, is described in Wright's Louthiana, the covering stone of which has three supporters, and measures twelve feet in length, by six feet in width. By the inhabitants it is called the Giant's load. The African monuments seen by me approach more in their dimensions to those of the one above described by Wright, than those referred to by Grose.

Cromlechs in Ireland, Cornwall, Anglesey, the Isle of Man, several parts of England, in Brittany, Normandy, in Denmark specially, some near Holstein, have common characteristics. They are rude monuments of unwrought massive blocks of stone, the supporters of the large superincumbent horizontal covering unhewn stone almost invariably laid

in a slanting direction, being indeterminate in number. Human remains, and urns with ashes and fragments of bones, have been so frequently found beneath the area of those monuments, that the opinion in all countries where they exist seems to be well established that they were used for sepulchral purposes, though not exclusively for them. The author of the "*Mona Antiqua Restaurata*" observes, that cromlechs, although perhaps often connected with the commemoration of the distinguished dead, were not themselves solely intended as sepulchres, but rather, in such instances, for altars of oblation and sacrifice, in conjunction with the former purpose.

In support of his opinion, he might have referred to observations on Druidical rites of ancient writers of great note. Tacitus, describing an attack of the Romans upon Mona, says that the British Druids "held it right to smear their altars with the blood of their captives, and to consult the will of the gods by the quivering of human flesh."

Diodorus, speaking of the Druids of Gaul, says:—"Pouring out a libation upon a man as a victim, they smite him with a sword upon the breast, in the part near the diaphragm; and on his falling who has been thus smitten, both from the manner of his falling, and from the convulsions of his limbs, and still more from the manner of the flowing of his blood, they presage what will come to pass."

King, the British archæologist, in his observations on the uses of cromlechs, and in particular of those of the cromlech called Kit's Coty House, maintains that these monuments were erected for the purpose of human sacrifice; that the great stone scaffold was raised just high enough for such a purpose, and no higher; and that these altars were so constructed and situated as to enable a multitude of people to see any sacrificial rite performed on them.

In regard, moreover, to cromlechs of very large dimensions, of which many specimens are to be seen in Ireland, as well as in Cornwall, Mr. King offers a remark, which is ingenious, if not entirely satisfactory. From the conspicuous site in which such fabrics are usually placed, and from the readiness with which the flow of blood might be traced on a slab of stone, large and sloping as is the covering stone of these cromlechs, he supposes that they were the altars on which human victims were sacrificed in attempts at divination. If Mr. King referred to some rare instances of cromlechs in which some traces are to be seen (apparently) of grooved channels in their horizontal covering stone in its longest direction, his observation would be less likely to be disputed.

No such grooved channel, I may observe, exists in any of those cromlechs visited by me in Northern Africa.

In confirmation of some of the views expressed in preceding observations, reference is made by Rowlands, Wright, and King, to the passage in the 24th chap., 26th verse, of the Book of Joshua in relation to the covenant made with the people of Shechem:—"And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone and set it up there under an oak that was by the sanctuary of the Lord."

In the Book of Ezekiel, vi. 13, we find still more striking allusions

to practices similar to those which have been ascribed to the idolatrous Druids :—"Then shall ye know that I am the Lord, when their slain men shall be among their idols round about their altars, upon every high hill in all the tops of the mountains, and under every green tree, and under every thick oak, the place where they did offer sweet savour to all their idols."

Again, in Hosea, iv. 13, we read of the idolatrous practices of the people of Israel :—"They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills, under oaks, and poplars, and elms, because the shadow thereof is good."

The custom of setting up on end over graves masses of unwrought stone, as memorials of the dead, may be presumed to be referred to in Genesis, xxxv. 20, in relation to Rachel's burial on the way to Ephrath :—"And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave : that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day."

The practice of frequenting places set apart chiefly for religious uses, for public convocations and assemblages for dispensing justice, is supposed to be referred to in the following passage in 1 Samuel, vii. 16, 17 :—"And he (Samuel) went from year to year in circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places. And his return was to Ramah : for there was his house : and there he judged Israel, and there he built an altar unto the Lord."

Wright, in his "Louthiana," 4to, 1748, lib. iii. p. 7, observes that the Irish Druids, whose works we trace over some parts of Ulster, and also in Leinster, undoubtedly had analogous rites and doctrines with some of the patriarchal tribes of the east. It was customary with the Druids of idolatrous usages, not only to live, but likewise to be buried, in the recesses of groves, and on the shady tops of hills ; and they were not only the chief places of resort on public festivals and for certain ceremonies, but were used for places of public worship and sepulchral purposes, for the remains of eminently privileged and distinguished personages.

Wright elsewhere, refuting the opinion of some archæologists that the cromlechs were solely or mainly used as altars for religious rites, says :—"I apprehend it will manifestly appear from what follows that they (cromlechs) were all erected over graves, and are no other than tombstones or sepulchral monuments raised to the memory of the most eminent men of those times. I could never bring myself to believe, from their vast heights and unevenness at top, that they could be designed purposely for altars, and especially as they seemed to be placed on so precarious a foundation. Having but three supports, if any one of them should be disturbed, the incumbent load must inevitably fall, and crush every thing in its way, which a fourth would have prevented from any such accident, and have rendered the whole together much more permanent and lasting."—"Louthiana," Book iii. p. 11.

The reason given in support of Wright's opinion in favour of the exclusive use of cromlechs for sepulchral purposes is of little value, independently of the notable error into which he has fallen in his

statement of the covering stone of these monuments having only three supports.

In Brittany they are indefinite in number, extending from three to seven, nine, or even more. Rowlands describes those of Anglesey as indeterminate in number, and, I may add, the same observation applies to those of Northern Africa.

The Rev. Henry Rowlands, in his "*Mona Antiqua Resturata*," 4to, 1723, p. 47, derives the name cromlech from the Hebrew *Cæraüm-lech* or *Cærem-luach*, a consecrated stone, which signifies an altar, and which signification is adduced in support of a theory of Mr. Rowlands', namely, that the first use and purpose of those monuments, erected in the East by the early descendants of Noah, and raised in every country they came to as they proceeded in peopling the earth, were connected with the service of true religion; but afterwards that such altars whereon had been offered the first-fruits of the earth to the true God were turned away to Pagan uses, and made to serve for oblations and sacrifices to false gods. But the author subsequently qualifies his opinion, and says:—"I deny not but there may be some probability of truth in them (the traditions existing of those monuments being sepulchres of renowned warriors or persons of great eminence interred in those places), and yet consistent enough with what I have said of them; for they might be both sepulchres and altars—I mean those of latter erection,—because, when the great ones of the first ages fell, those who were eminent among the people for some extraordinary qualities and virtues, their enamoured posterity continued their veneration to them to their very graves, over which they erected some of those altars or cromlechs, on which, when their true religion faltered, and became depraved and corrupted, they might make oblations and offer sacrifices to their departed ghosts. From this practice, it is likely, grew the apotheosis of the first heroes, and from thence the gross idolatries of the Gentiles."

The author, at page 214, proceeds to show that cromlechs are types and reproductions of the most ancient monuments in the world; for in the Sacred Scripture it is said that as soon as Noah and his family came out of the ark, they built an altar unto the Lord. And to build (the Hebrew word equivalent to *edificare* in the original), imports the erection of raising stones, one upon another; and this signification of the word is somewhat exegetically amplified in another place, viz., Haggai, ch. ii., v. 15, where such a construction is expressed by the Hebrew words employed, literally rendered, "Stone laid on a stone." And, further, the author argues, that altars of stones so erected of masses of rude unhewn rock, such as those early altars must have been necessarily at that period, were such as our cromlechs are at this day. Moreover, he observes, "It is presumptive also that they then had a strict precept for such structures, if that precept, 'Thou shalt not build an altar of hewn stones,' be (as a great part of the chapter is) a repetition of the old original law which the patriarchs before them in all probability strictly observed, and other nations, probably after their example, as strictly followed; by which it will appear that our cromlechs are but

the remaining effects of that ancient law and custom of not striking a tool upon the stones of their altars, but to build them up of the rudest lumps and slivers of stones they could meet with, which law we may well conclude to have prevailed likewise in these countries, and that these mentioned monuments of ours are some of the remains of that ancient institution and custom.”*

I may observe that Mr. Rowlands, at page 214 of his first essay, modifies the derivation of the term cromlech, which he gave at page 47, as from the Hebrew words *Cæcæm-luath*, a devoted stone or altar. In the second essay, he observes—“The name cromlech may seem to be no other than a corrupt pronouncing of an original Hebrew name, *chemar-luach*, a burning or sacrificing stone or table; or, perhaps more likely, as I before intimated from (the Hebrew words) *charum-luch*, or *luach*, i. e. a consecrated stone, or devoted stone or altar.” But the orthography even of the latter words is different from that of the Hebrew words first referred to by the author.

Brewer, in his “*Beauties of Ireland*” (8vo. 1825, vol. i., p. 87, Introd.), derives the term cromlech “from the words *crom*, bent, and *leac*, a flag or stone.”

I am indebted to a better authority than either of the above-named writers, the most eminent of living Irish scholars, Eugene Curry, for the following observations on the derivation of the term cromlech:—

“The compound term, cromlech, is not an Irish formation, though the component parts are Irish slightly corrupted in the second part. The words are *crom*—stooped, sloped, or inclined; and *leac* (not lech) pronounced *lack*, a flag or rock with a flat level surface.

“There is no such compound word, nor with such a signification as it now has, to be found in the proper Irish language.

“I believe the term was first formed by Bishop Owen, of Wales, about A. D. 1600, in translating the English Bible into Welsh, and was applied by him to rocks or cliffs which shelved forward, so as to leave clefts, or rather sheltered recesses, for foxes and other wild animals to seek shelter in. I speak from memory in relation to the latter part of the subject, but as an authority in relation to the first.”

This slight notice of an interesting subject, I venture to hope, may call the attention of some eminent archæologists to the numerous monuments identical with our cromlechs existing in Northern Africa, capable of examining them with all due scientific knowledge and familiarity with investigations of this kind.

And in conclusion I would venture to suggest, that in comparing the monuments of a primeval antiquity—the supposed cromlechs of other countries—with those existing in our own land, it should be borne in mind that the genuine and unfailing characteristics of those last-mentioned monuments are the following:—The supporters and the covering slab of them are invariably of unhewn stone; the covering unwrought

* *Mona Antiqua*, p. 214.

slab has, or originally had, some inclination (lengthways) in it; the supporters are rude blocks of stone, set on end, apart, seldom found forming a continuous closed surface, either at the sides or end.*

EXPLANATION OF PLATE XVI.

- Fig. 1.—Small African sepulchral urn—one-third of size of object, found beneath a cromlech at Bainen, near Algiers,—of the rudest form, fabric, and material, and without any ornamentation; referred to in preceding notice of cromlechs in Northern Africa.
- Fig. 2.—Small Celtic sepulchral urn, one-third of size of object, found in a cemetery *Gaulois*, at Molineaux, near Rouen (described by the Abbé Cochet, at page 11 of the “*Sepultures Gauloises et Normandes*,” 8vo., Par. 1857), of same size and quality as the one found under the cromlech at Algiers, and likewise without ornamentation.
- Fig. 3.—Large Irish sepulchral urn, one-fourth the size of object, with a quantity of bones, all broken into small fragments, partially calcined, found on the Altmore property of Edward Litton, Esq., Master in Chancery, on the summit of the Cappagh mountain, parish of Pome-roy, county of Tyrone, beneath a cairn, at an elevation above the sea of 946 feet, in a square, stone-built chamber, closed externally by a huge block of stone; within which chamber the above-mentioned urn, some ashes, burnt bones, and charcoal, were discovered; but no weapons or ornaments of any kind. This urn—unquestionably of the most remote antiquity—was presented by Master Litton to R. R. Madden.

* Since the preceding notice of certain cromlechs in the vicinity of Algiers was read before the Royal Irish Academy, on the 14th of April, 1862, my attention was called to an elaborate article on “British Remains at Dartmoor,” by Sir J. Gardiner Wilkinson, published in the “*Journal of the British Archæological Association*” of March 31, 1862. In that article Sir J. G. Wilkinson refers cursorily to the cromlechs in the vicinity of Algiers, recently visited by me, and described in my paper on those monuments, read before the Royal Irish Academy. Sir J. G. Wilkinson’s reference to them is contained in the following passage:—

“And about twelve miles from Algiers, on the plateau of Bainam, is a great assemblage of cromlechs.”

In several other parts of Africa, monuments of an analogous character are referred to by Sir J. G. Wilkinson as having been “described by Mr. Rhind, in his interesting Memoir on Ortholithic Remains in Africa” (“*Archæologia*,” vol. xxxix.)—a work, I may observe, at the date of this note (June 10, 1862), not yet received in Ireland. “Mr. Rhind,” observes Sir J. G. Wilkinson, “has enumerated the following:—A stone circle near Tangiers, and other rude megaliths in Morocco; and in Algeria, near Zebdon, to the south of Tlemecen, a cromlech at Tiaret, 100 miles from the sea, the capstone of which measures 65 feet by 26 feet, and 9½ feet in thickness, raised 40 feet from the ground, with steps cut to ascend it, and three basins or square troughs cut upon its upper surface, the largest 3 feet on each side, and communicating with each other by channels 4 inches broad, and of less depth than the basins. Some long stones are in the neighbourhood still standing; and about twelve miles from Algiers, on the plateau of Bainam, is a great assemblage of cromlechs; and near Djelfa several tombs, composed of four slabs, covered by one or two others, each surrounded by a single or double circle of rude stone, about nine inches long, in which district a stone celt has been found; at Sigus, near to Con-

The Rev. Dr. REEVES read the following paper :—

ON THE ISLAND OF SANDA.

THE little island of Sanda, lying some three miles off the southern coast of Cantyre, is about four miles in circumference. The Mull of Cantyre, which is situate on its west, is the point where Scotland is nearest to Ireland, being only eleven miles and a half distant from Tor Head, in the county of Antrim.* It formerly belonged to the parish of Kilblane; but, together with it, and Kilcolmkill, is now comprehended in the parochial union of Southend. This being the route by which the early Scotie immigration from Ireland passed over to Alba, the whole district is strongly impressed with social and ecclesiastical features of an Irish character. The language always bore the name of the colonists, and the term *Erse* of the modern day is only a modification of it.† The traditional associations of the people all looked westward, and the titles of nearly all the adjacent parishes are commemorative of illustrious worthies of the Irish church.‡ Kilcolmkill, Kilblane, Kilkivan, Kilchenzie, Kilkerran, Kilmarow, and Kilcalmonel, bear the impress of St. Columba's, St. Blaas's, St. Kevin's, St. Caimnech's, St. Kieran's, St. Maolrubha's, and St. Colman-elo's veneration. We may expect, therefore, to find in the historical scrap which has been handed down to us regarding the island of Sanda sufficient matter to interest an Irishman, and render its notice a suitable subject for the consideration of the Academy.

The received name of the island is of Norse origin; but the Irish name is *Abhuinn*, of which *Aven*, as it is known among the Highlanders, is merely a variety. Fordun, in the fifteenth century, calls it *Insula Awyn*;§ Dean Monro, at the close of the sixteenth, *Avoyne*;|| while George Buchanan latinizes it *Avona*, which he interprets "portuosa," as if a deflexion of "haven."¶

stantine, are other tombs, and in the same province some megaliths (*dolmens*); in Kabylia, one or more cromlechs, and others in the regency of Tunis; and in the Zengur district, Dr. Barth speaks of a trilithon 10 feet high, with a lintel 6 feet 6 inches in length."

—See "Journal of Archæological Society," March 31, 1862, p. 43.

* New Statistical Account of Scotland," vol. vii., pt. 2, p. 414.

† See Adamnan's "Columba" (Irish Archæol. and Celtic Soc.), p. xxxix.

‡ The contrast between the parochial nomenclature on the east and west sides of Scotland is very striking. On the east, the names are for the most part secular, and derived from the Pictish age; on the west, they are generally ecclesiastical in their origin, combining with the prefix *Kill* the name of some commemorated Irish saint.

§ "Insula Awyn, ubi cella sancti Adamnani, ibique pro transgressoribus refugium." Scotichron., lib. ii. cap. 10 (vol. i. p. 45, ed. Goodall).

|| "Before the south poynt of the promontory of Kyntyre, lyes be ane myle of sea, ane iyle neire ane myle lange, callit the iyle Avoyne, quhilk iyle is obtained that name fra the armies of Denmark, quhilkis armies callit it in their leid Havin. It is inhabit and manurit, and guid for shippes to lay one ankers."—Description of Western Isles, 1594.

¶ Hist. Scot., lib. i. cap. 35. See Extracta e Var. Chron. Scot., p. 9; Orig. Paroch. Scotiæ, vol. ii. pt. 1, p. 9, and pt. 2, p. 820; Old Statist. Acct. of Scotland, vol. iii. p. 366

Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

SEPULCHRAL URNS.